UAE Market Exploration Program
Dubai is UAE's startup and scaleup city. Their Economic Agenda ‘D33’ aims to double their economy and foreign trade within 10 years. Attracting and supporting local and foreign scaling startups lies at the core of their agenda, e.g. by

• "raising" 30 global unicorns by 2031 through specific scale-up support

• being the leading IPO market in the world. Currently, Dubai ranks as the world’s fastest growing VC ecosystem.

• becoming the major global innovation hub for testing and commercializing new technologies (“Sandbox Dubai”)

• growing their digital economy to over US$140 billion (from today’s US$38 billion), attracting 300 new digital economy startups in 2024 alone

• establishing Dubai as a global hub for higher education and increasing its population by 250,000 inhabitants p.a.

To become a Leading Global Hub for 4th Industrial Revolution Applications (Physical Technology, Digital Technology, and Biotechnology)

“What is good for business is good for Dubai”
~ Sheik Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai
### Why explore the UAE?

Few of the many reasons...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unrivalled Reach</th>
<th>Business Hub</th>
<th>Scale-up Tech Ecosystem</th>
<th>Access to Capital &amp; Talent</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Advantageous location</strong> between the East and the West.</td>
<td>Regional <strong>headquarters for 70 percent of Fortune 500 companies</strong> in Dubai alone (largest number in MENA)</td>
<td><strong>1st globally in the Global Entrepreneurship Index 2023</strong></td>
<td>VC ecosystem heavily backed by <strong>sovereign wealth funds and family offices</strong>, attracting unique inflow of <strong>international VC</strong>.</td>
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<td><strong>Access to 2.4 bn consumers</strong> in the middle East, Indian Sub-continent, and Africa</td>
<td><strong>Globally, the UAE is ranked 16th for 'ease of doing business', 1st for 'business efficiency' and, 2nd for 'government efficiency'</strong></td>
<td><strong>1st Country in the world to have the world’s first minister for Artificial Intelligence</strong></td>
<td>Dubai-based startups account for &gt; <strong>50% of all MENA-wide funding</strong> (excluding Israel),</td>
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<td><strong>2/3 of the global population within an 8-hour flight</strong></td>
<td><strong>1st regionally and 11th globally of world’s most modern countries</strong> in 2023</td>
<td><strong>UAE’s scale-up startups showed a remarkable 26% year-on-year growth</strong>, rising from 241 in 2021 to over 306 in 2022</td>
<td><strong>UAE, esp. Dubai: Highest inflow of talent globally.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>44 tax-free zones for global trade</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Dubai’s scale-up startups showed a remarkable 26% year-on-year growth</strong>, rising from 241 in 2021 to over 306 in 2022</td>
<td><strong>Dubai’s goal: Highest number of coders per capita</strong> (e.g. offering 100,000 Golden Visa)</td>
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Roadblocks in UAE Expansion
Quotes from 40+ German startups which we interviewed before setting up our program

"Received interest from the market, but [online] negotiations took forever and were unsuccessful in the end."

"Hiring locally was a huge learning curve for us. "Wasta" [network & access] is everything in the Middle East, but almost impossible to understand who really has it"

"Forget about cold outreach; we lost 6 months trying to convert leads."

"I have to warn you, there is a lot of scam going on, especially when it comes to service providers to set up shop."

"The UAE is not only an interesting market for us. Much more their tax-free zones opened the whole region for us at minimum costs."

You might think you have met the right person, but it's not as simple as it looks. Finding the right Waasta is the biggest bottleneck.

Knowing the right business language and etiquettes is as important as having the right problem solution. If you have the greatest product but don't have the right messaging, it's not going to work.

"Once we were on the ground, things started to move extremely fast. The hospitality and handshake-based way of business is simply amazing! But, of course, it takes a lot of trust."

"One day we felt like the centre of the universe for our partners, next day the seemed to have forgotten that we exist."
German Entrepreneurship in partnership with Dubai Internet City and In 5

UAE Market Exploration Program

UAE & Abu Dhabi (Hybrid)
Dates: January-February 2024
Meet our partners on ground

**Dubai Internet City**, the region’s premier tech hub which fosters innovation through the collaborative efforts of its dynamic tech community, uniting brilliant minds and businesses to make history together.

**in5** as an enabling platform for entrepreneurs and start-ups within this vibrant ecosystem, provides a robust start-up framework, creative spaces, specialized industry centers, training and mentorship programs, community-wide networking events, and access to investors, nurturing ideas and businesses towards their next phase of growth.
Program contents

Business Culture Do's & Don’t

Market Knowledge
Learn about Dubai, the UAE and the GCC markets, opportunities and pitfalls from experts and peers

Operational Know How
Understand legal as well as technical best practices to enter the market and set up shop

Scale-up Support Ecosystem
Get navigation through the diverse support systems meet with pitch in front of the most important ecosystem players

Sales Best Practices
Venture Capital Ecosystem
Learn from local investors what they are looking for, meet them 1:1, and hear from peers about differences to European investors

Business Development
1:1 face to face meetings with potential clients, partners, and peers

Expert Mentoring
Let local industry experts coach you in 1:1 sessions
Timeline: UAE Market Exploration Class 2024-1

Phase 1: Preparation
Jan 18 - 19
- Prep Days

Phase 2: Lead Gen
Jan 20 - 26
- 1:1 Mentoring
  - Intermission
  - Time for outreach and set-up of meetings for immersion week (by mentors and teams)

Phase 3: Immersion Week
Feb 14 – 20
- In-country Dubai & Abu Dhabi
- Attend workshops, roundtables, fireside chats, ecosystem visits, guided tours, pitch and networking events, as well as personalized 1:1 meetings with customers, partners, and more.
- Optional: Step Conference Dubai

Phase 4: Results
Feb 21 – 22
- Wrap-up & Next Steps
- Free all access tickets*
- Result consolidation
- Wrap-up sessions & Next steps w/ mentor & program team

Get to know the other participants and learn "the basics" about the UAE ecosystem, their business culture and how to do sales
Discuss with your industry expert mentor your potential go-to-market, identify together who you need to meet in the UAE and who can make the meetings happen
## Session overview (preliminary)

<table>
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<th>Phase 1: Kick Off (Virtual)</th>
<th>Phase 2: (Dubai &amp; Abu Dhabi/Sharjah Immersion) (in-person)</th>
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<td><strong>Introduction</strong> to Mentor and industry experts</td>
<td><strong>Overview:</strong> Middle East Business Culture, Dos &amp; Don’ts</td>
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<td><strong>Founders &amp; Startup experts:</strong> Opportunities, Hurdles, In-country Experiences</td>
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<td><strong>Ecosystem Overview: UAE &amp; GCC</strong></td>
<td><strong>1:1 Industry expert meeting</strong></td>
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<td>1:1 Mentor sessions</td>
<td><strong>Local Ecosystem Visits</strong> Accelerators, startups, investors, and more.</td>
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<td><strong>Legal Insights:</strong> Setting Up Shop, Visa, License + HR/Recruiting insights</td>
<td><strong>Insights from German founders who raised funds in UAE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Deep Dive on Tax-free zones (overview &amp; differences) vs. Mainland</strong></td>
<td><strong>Government focus areas (e.g. D33) &amp; startup support schemes</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1:1 Local startup Peer meeting:</strong> Discuss the market realities</td>
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<td><strong>German Startup Night:</strong> Pitch &amp; Networking Sessions with Corporates, Government and Industry Experts + (Local conference, if any)</td>
<td><strong>VC insights:</strong> Q&amp;A with local VCs and SWF offices + networking</td>
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*The program is subject to changes.*
Cultural Immersion on the Weekend
Invest vs Outcome

The program is partly funded by German Entrepreneurship GmbH and Dubai Internet City. A fee of 5,000 € per startup will cover the rest of the costs.

- Deep understanding of the market
- Sales strategy for local market
- In-person meetings with potential customers & partners
- Access to UAE startup ecosystem
- Deep dive into setting up shop
- In-country experience to connect with right stakeholders
Our alumni (extract)
We look forward to working with you

Architects of Innovation Ecosystems around the Globe

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